

the journal of  
college radio

Vol. 18, No. 2

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# Public Files

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*More Stations on the AM Dial?*

*Record Company Relations*

*What Happened to the News?*

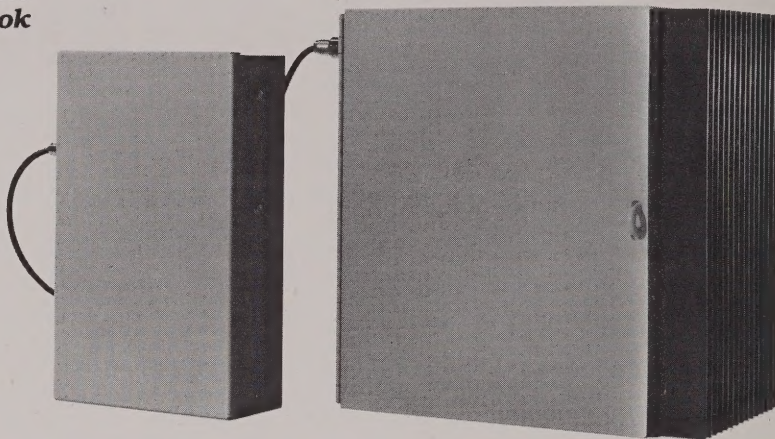
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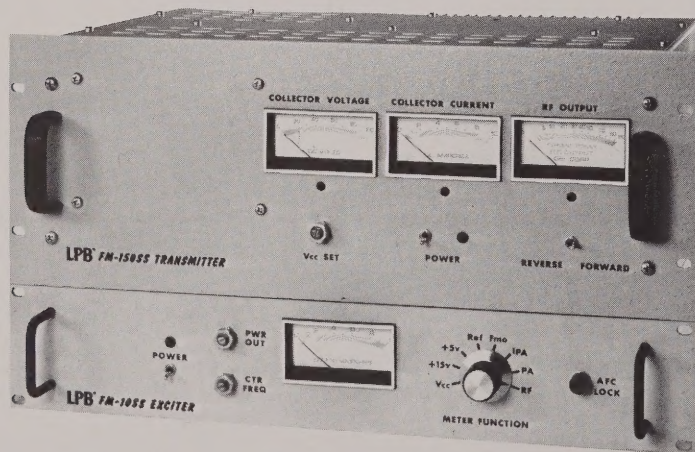
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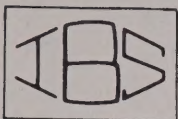
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**IBS**

October, 1980  
Vol. 18, No. 2

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JEFF TELLIS

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# from the editor

The school and college radio convention season is upon us again with several on the schedule this Fall and Winter. The "National Student Broadcasters Convention" previously held in Boston, moves to Hartford on October 24-26th at the Sonesta Hotel. It is hosted and put together by the people at WUMB, UMASS/Boston. In November, Loyola holds its annual conference starting on the 14th in Chicago, and the IBS West Coast Convention is scheduled for November 21-23rd at the Golden Gateway Holiday Inn in San Francisco. This year, the IBS West Coast Convention is being hosted by KUSF at the University of San Francisco, and for more information, you can get in touch with them at (415) 387-3803.

The big IBS National Convention is set for March 6-8, 1981, at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. This is usually the largest of the college radio conventions, and another good year is expected. Information will be put in the mail to all IBS member-stations, and others can request it by writing to: IBS National Convention, Box 592, Vails Gate, NY 12584, or by calling (914) 565-6710.

\* \* \* \*

We couldn't help but notice all the excitement surrounding the FCC's announced proposal for low-power TV stations across the country and the resulting scramble it will create for new-but-smaller TV stations. The purpose is to provide opportunities for

additional access to the TV airwaves and the encouragement of still more diversity in the choices for viewers. We tend to agree with this reasoning, but wonder why it doesn't also apply to the noncommercial educational FM band. Here, just the opposite attitude is found; bigger is better. And so, 10-watt stations are being strongly motivated to increase power, while those who remain at 10-watts may be forced to change frequency. All this to make room for higher-powered stations. While low-power TV applications are encouraged, low-powered FM applications are not acceptable under a "freeze" imposed by the FCC for an indefinite period of time. Not only that, but the way the rules now read, if there should be an available frequency for 100-watts or more in a given location, an existing 10-watt station could **not** apply to expand to that level, while a new applicant could propose exactly the same expanded facilities and be acceptable. Never before can we remember an existing licensee having **less** rights than a new applicant!

\* \* \* \*

Because of the late distribution of this issue, a belated congratulations to WRUC at Union College in Schenectady, New York, where they celebrated the station's **60th** anniversary on October 14th. Though the claim is disputed by KDKA in Pittsburgh, WRUC claims their October 14, 1920 broadcast was the first scheduled broadcast by a licensed

radio station in the country. They claim they beat out KDKA, who signed-on with a November 2, 1920 broadcast of the Harding-Cox election results. And, they've sent us a number of newspaper accounts to verify their claims. Another first for college radio!

\* \* \* \*

In this issue are a number of articles of interest. Jeff Close begins a new column, "Across the Spectrum" which this month discusses the probabilities for a number of new AM stations getting on the air. Dr. Jerry Hudson takes a look at news content rather than format. And, Norm Prusslin's music column has some brief suggestions regarding record company relations, a topic of increasing interest in a time of decreasing service. The cover story concerns the action-packed topic of Public Files — what you need, where it should be, and who should be given access. Admittedly, this topic may not be a real attention-grabber, but it should be a welcome alternative to trying to plow through the piles of FCC jargon found in the rules.

\* \* \* \*

The next issue of the **Journal of College Radio** is scheduled for December publication. It'll be the annual directory issue with station listings and source lists for equipment, records, programs, PSA's and other services.

Meanwhile, let us hear from you with articles, ideas, suggestions, criticisms and such.

JT





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JOURNAL OF COLLEGE RADIO, VOL. 18, NO. 2



# across the spectrum:

## More Stations on the AM Dial?

by Jeff Close

*Editor's Note: Readers of JCR should be familiar with Jeff Close's previous articles on technical topics which have appeared in this publication. He was also a featured speaker at several sessions during last year's IBS National Convention. With this issue, he begins a series of columns discussing contemporary issues involving the broadcast spectrum. He brings to these pages his impressive background and experience in a variety of engineering and technical*

*positions. At present, he is an engineer in the Policy Division of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration [NTIA], an agency which has taken an increasingly active role in proposing new ideas and improvements in the ways electronic communications are utilized and regulated. It should be noted that the views and opinions expressed in these columns are those of Mr. Close personally, and do not necessarily represent those of NTIA or*

*any other agency or organization. Upcoming columns will deal with a number of topics and issues including: AM Stereo [To Be or Not To Be?]; Spectrum Utilization in Commercial FM; TV Channel 6 and EDFM; Low-Power TV; UHF Comes of Age; VHF Drop-Ins; Direct Broadcast Satellites; Cable Turned Loose. Your comments in response to these columns, whether in agreement or opposition, are most welcomed.*

JT

Recently, the FCC resolved what may have been their longest running Docket. Known informally as the Clear Channel Proceeding, this issue was first brought up right after WW II. Almost half of the AM dial is allocated to the clear channels. Clear channels began in the late 1920's under the concept that having only one high-powered station on a channel at night could serve a much greater area than many low-powered stations who would interfere with each other due to long distance skywave propagation which happens at night.

One of the prices that must be paid is that many AM stations go off the air at night. In fact, half the number of stations on AM are silent at night. Of these daytime stations, about half are on clear channels. The daytimers would like to go on at night, but the resolution of the proceeding does not change their status. However, the FCC has now limited the protection that some of the clear channel stations will receive in the future. Some of the clear channel stations have had the whole country to themselves at night, but in the future will only be protected to a radius of 750 miles. It was determined by the FCC that although reception of a clear channel station (50 kilowatts),

is very possible beyond 750 miles, such reception was not dependable service and that new low-powered stations should be permitted beyond the 750 mile limit provided that the new stations cause no interference inside the 750 limit.

Clear channel proponents had argued that the clear channel stations should be permitted to raise their power to 500,000 watts! The Commission rejected these arguments noting that more voices are needed on the airwaves. The Commission also cited the unsuccessful high-powered experiment of station WLW in the thirties and other experiments which suggest that such high power might even "burn a hole" in the upper atmosphere.

Limiting the protection of the clear channels should allow about 125 new AM stations to come on the air in the next few years. The FCC is giving priority to stations that will provide new, first full-time service, that are minority owned, or are **educational noncommercial**. Although the bulk of noncommercial radio is FM, there are over 40 noncommercial AM stations and there could be more.

Unfortunately, most of the new stations may fall in the Western half of the nation, not in the Northeast where

the educational FM band is very crowded. But, later this decade, there will be more AM spectrum for the whole country, with top end of the AM band being expanded to 1705 kHz. The decision to expand the AM band came at the Global World Administrative Radio Conference (GWARC). The GWARC is held by one of the oldest world organizations, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). The United States had hoped that the band would be expanded even further, but is pleased to see another 100 kHz for AM broadcasting.

The obvious problem with these new channels, besides the fact that they won't start until the latter half of the decade, is that nearly no one now has a receiver that goes above 1600 kHz. This means that it will take time before people buy new AM sets or converters for their present ones. Such a problem could be aided by the advent of AM stereo. Manufacturers could expand the dial with the new stereo receivers. That assumes a standard for AM stereo is eventually set, which will be the subject of the next article in this series.

Since AM broadcast band expansion is too far into the future, and the new slots opened by the Clear Channel Proceeding are too few, how



can the spectrum be opened up on the shorter term to many new stations? The answer may be to change the channel spacing of AM stations from 10 kHz to 9 kHz. Except for North and South America (Region II), the rest of the world has gone to 9 kHz spacings.

Going to 9 kHz spacing would not likely change the bandwidth of AM stations. It is a common misconception that AM radio has a bandwidth of 5 kHz above and below the carrier frequency, i.e., an audio bandwidth of 5 kHz. This is not so. The FCC rules allow the audio of an AM signal go to 15 kHz, just the same as FM. The reason few of us are aware of this is because the bandwidth of receivers is generally 5 kHz at best.

There is no doubt that tightening the AM dial will cause some increase in adjacent channel interference where stations are at or below recommended minimum spacings. Just how many stations would be affected and by how much is uncertain. Estimates for stations in this category are that they will need 3 to 5 dB additional protection from stations on adjacent channels.

The possible benefits of moving to 9

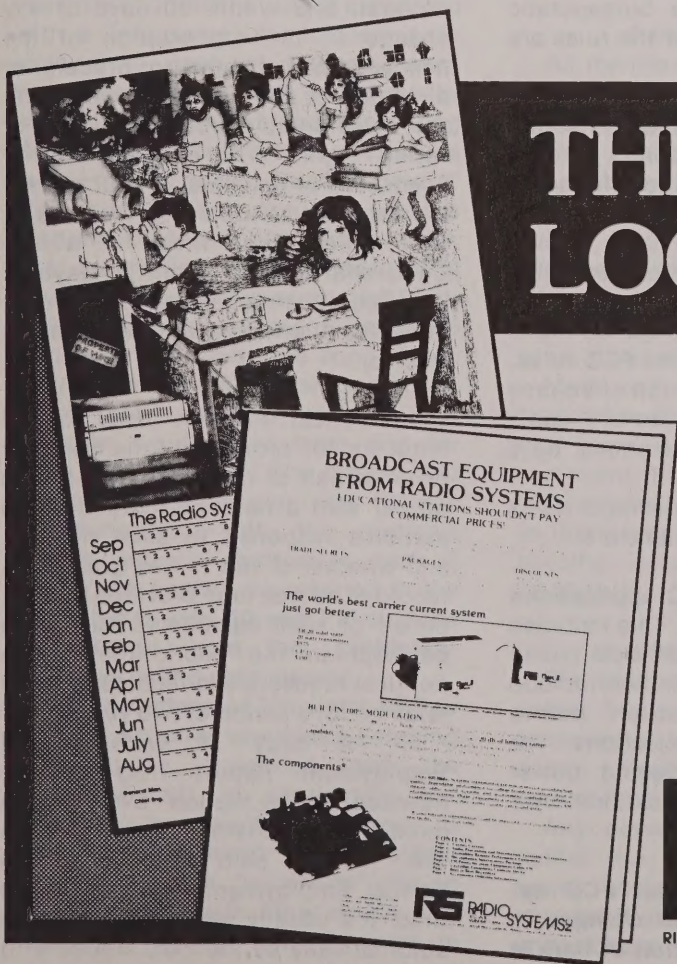
kHz spacing is that 12 new channels would be created. The new channelling plan would begin at the present 540 kHz and step by increments of 9 kHz, hence, the next channel would be at 549 kHz. Changing to this plan will require that some present stations move as much as 4 kHz to their new frequency. Tests have shown that such a change is possible, even for directional antennas which are far more complex and difficult to manage in the AM band than in the FM band. However, there are other ways to realign stations into the new 9 kHz plan. The method just described, which is the position of the United States, would open new single channels every 90 kHz. Another plan, submitted by Canada, which finds some favor in South America, would require some stations to move as much as 9 kHz. The objective of the Canadian Plan is to open two channels adjacent to each other so that at least one of these channels could be used in one of their major cities for a high-powered station.

The decision for 9 kHz spacing has not yet been made. In November of 1981, the countries of Region II (the

Americas) will meet for a second time to decide upon this issue. In their first meeting, it was decided to study the 9 kHz plan further before taking action. The sentiment in the first regional meeting seemed more against 9 kHz than the present informal meetings in preparation for the next full meeting. That negative attitude could have been spurred by letters from the National Association of Broadcasters to the various countries involved. The N.A.B. opposition may involve some interest in protecting existing AM stations from both the expenses involved in a frequency change, and the added competition anticipated from an influx of new stations. The FCC and the State Department were not happy with these letters. Besides undermining the U.S. position, the letters may have been technically illegal. A law passed in the 1970's relating to Indian Affairs gave the federal government the sole authority to deal with governments of foreign countries.

Whether the National Association of Broadcasters are pleased with the recent actions of the FCC or not, the prospects for additional spectrum in the AM band are very good.

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# public files

by Jeff Tellis

What if someone walked into your station right now and asked the first person encountered for a look at your station's public file? What kind of a reaction would they get? A stunned look of disbelief? A scratching of the head and a request to repeat the question? A panic-stricken dash for the faculty advisor's office? An "I'm sorry, but I don't know what you're talking about"?

Or would your station staff person know exactly what the request meant and how to handle it?

At most stations, this situation simply doesn't happen very often, if at all. Because of this, some stations are not prepared for it. But, you should be.

As 10-watt FM stations increase their power and as the FCC takes a closer look at noncommercial educational FM, the likelihood of a visit from the FCC is increased. The Commission is also proposing a "postcard renewal" procedure which could mean more thorough inspection visits on a random basis for the lucky stations chosen.

Members of the public are becoming more aware of the power of broadcast media and more willing to inject their input, more vocally expressing their opinions, and playing a more active role in broadcast station licensing and renewal procedures.

All of this means stations have to take a closer look at their own operations to assure FCC compliance. And, the public file is one of those murky areas where a number of stations simply haven't yet concentrated their efforts. Chances are, these stations have all or most of the materials required for inclusion within the public file, but they may not be all

together in one place as they should. Also, station personnel may not be familiar with the requirements relating to the availability of material in the public file to members of the general public.

Most station managers have simply not taken the time to familiarize themselves with the applicable rules and therefore haven't passed this information on to their staff. They may not have known where to look to find the appropriate rules, or upon finding them, they may not have fully understood some of the bureaucratic jargon in which some of the rules are written.

Our objective is to provide a basic overview of the requirements relating to content and availability in understandable English, and offer some suggestions on implementation and where to find out more.

Most of the information regarding public files for noncommercial educational FM stations can be found in Section 73.3527 of the FCC rules. (That's in the newer section of Volume III where many of the rules applicable to different kinds of stations have been consolidated).

Here's a rundown of the major items that should be in your public file:

**1. A copy of all FCC applications filed after May 13, 1965.** This includes all applications for which local public notice is required. Examples include your original construction permit application, any applications for facilities changes (including power increases), and applications for license renewals.

**2. A copy of all other FCC applications which involve changes in program service, extension of time in**

**which to complete construction, and assignment or transfer of control of the station.** If any petitions to deny have been filed against an application, the public file must contain a statement that such a petition has been filed, and it must include the name and address of the person or group filing the petition.

**3. A copy of the station's Ownership Reports [FCC form 323E]** and any contracts which may relate to them. (You are required to file an Ownership Report with each license renewal, and within 30 days of any change in the organization of the licensee, any change in officers or directors, or any transaction affecting the ownership, direct or indirect, or voting rights with respect to the licensee. For example, if your station is licensed to a Board of Trustees of your college, you must file a new Ownership Report within 30 days of the appointment of any new trustee, or the resignation or death of an existing trustee).

**4. Political File.** A copy of all requests for broadcast time made by or on behalf of candidates for public office, with a notation indicating the station's response to each request, and whether or not it was granted. A record of all free time provided to or on behalf of such candidates must also be kept in the public file. These political requests and records must be retained for a period of two years.

**5. A copy of each Annual Employment Report** filed by the licensee for the station. Even though most student-staffed stations have few, if any, paid employees, this Annual Employment Report must be filed. It's usually sent to the licensee automatically by the FCC. Those with



fewer than 5 employees (most of our stations) need complete only certain sections of the report before filing.

**6. A copy of "The Public and Broadcasting: Revised Edition".** This is an all-purpose primer published by the FCC to explain the processes and procedures involved in broadcast applications, written for the public in an effort to help them provide their input in the form of ideas, support, and opposition. If you don't have a copy, you can find it in the Federal Register, September 5, 1974, beginning on page 32288. Many libraries subscribe to the Federal Register, as do many legal offices. Perhaps an easier way to get a copy of this booklet is to write and request it from the FCC's Office of Consumer Assistance, 1919 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20054. You can also reach them by phone at (202) 632-7000 or 632-7260.

**7. For stations of 100-watts ERP or more: Problems/Programs List.** This is part of the Ascertainment of Community Needs process which requires stations to annually compile a list of no more than 10 significant problems and needs of the area served by the station during the previous year. This "problems" list is correlated with a "programs" list indicating, in relation to each of the problems, typical and illustrative programs or series which were broadcast during the previous year in response to those problems and needs. This "programs" list must include the title of the program or series, its source, type, brief description, time broadcast, and duration. This problems/programs list, which must not exceed 5 pages, is placed in the public file annually on the anniversary date of the deadline on which the station's renewal application would have been due for filing with the FCC. The current and previous problems/programs listings are submitted with the station's license renewal application each 3 years, and copies are retained in the public file as well. **10-watt FM stations are exempt from this problems/programs listing requirement.**

**8. For stations of 100-watts ERP or more: A narrative statement** detailing the sources consulted and the methods used in conducting the station's ascertainment survey to determine the needs and problems identified in the "problems" listing described above. In other words, the FCC wants to know how you came up

with the list of problems and needs. This narrative statement must be placed in the public file and submitted with license renewal applications on the same schedule as shown for the problems/programs list above. **10-watt FM stations are also exempt from this narrative statement requirement.**

**9. The names of those donors** contributing funds, service or to other consideration to support station programming **unless** you've already entered those names in the program log.

#### Location of Public File

The rules require the public file to be physically maintained at the main studio of the station, or at any public place, such as another office at the school, college, or university, or at a local attorney's office in the community in which the station is licensed. These files must be available for public inspection at any time during regular business hours. If not at the station, office personnel at the public file location should be instructed as to the procedures for access, content, retention, and copying requirements.

#### Period of Retention

As mentioned, the political records required must be kept in the public file for a period of 2 years. Construction permit applications must be kept in the public file while they are still pending before the FCC or before the courts. Engineering material relating to a former mode of operation must be retained for 3 years from the time the station begins operation under a new or modified mode.

Most other material must be retained in the public file for a period of 7 years. Any material relating to a complaint, FCC investigation or other legal proceeding must be kept as long as that proceeding is still open. More specific details can be found in 73.3527 (g)

#### Availability to the Public

The whole purpose of maintaining a public file is to make it available to members of the public, should they desire to see it. This is in line with your obligations as a public trustee.

Any person can ask to see your public file during normal business hours, without an appointment. You are permitted to ask the person's name and address.

#### Photocopies

The station must make any material available in the public file available for photocopying upon a request made in person, but the requesting party must pay any reasonable costs involved. The station is not required to have a photocopying machine available on its premises, but can specify another location for such requests. Copies must be made available within a reasonable amount of time, no more than 7 days, unless there are no reproduction facilities available in the licensee's city of license. The station does not have to honor requests made by mail for copies, but it may do so if it chooses.

#### Security

Certainly, the station must safeguard its own files and should never allow materials from the public file to be given to a member of the public to take out of the station. Photocopies should be made by station personnel who assure that all original file documents are retained by the station.

Most stations rarely experience a member of the public walking in and

(Continued on page 12)

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# music: record company relations

by Norman Prusslin

There are many different ways to prepare a college radio station music programming playlist. At past IBS National Conventions, college radio record company representatives have continually emphasized the need for station Music Directors to develop a consistent, concise and truthful "play" sheet. This information insures the necessary meaningful and mutually beneficial relationship between the station and record company.

If you've been reading the music industry trade magazines, you're probably aware that, like the rest of business in today's economy, this is not particularly the best of times for the record industry. With record bootlegging, pirating and home off-air taping becoming more widespread, the music industry is becoming a bit more fiscally conservative than it was during the 1978 Saturday Night Fever glory days.

One area that has been hard hit by this cutback in activity is that of free record album service, especially to college and other non-commercial operations. One can (and we at IBS do) argue that this doesn't make much sense since much of the music being produced by first-time-around artists gets its premier exposure over college radio airwaves.

It is therefore the job of the Music Director, first and foremost to build a strong bond between the station and as many record companies as possible. In many instances, you may have to "sell" your station to the rep. Build up all of your positive points (only alternative station in market, power, strong link between airplay and local sales, etc.). Remember, the days of wine and roses are over. While **you** may think that your station is the greatest operation around, keep in mind that the record company looks to

make the greatest impact in areas that will guarantee the greatest return for their investment. . . in other words you must convince the rep that airplay on your station indeed sells record for the company.

If you are not fortunate to be located in an area that is conducive to a person-to-person relationship with record reps, the most important link that you have is the mailed playlist. A playlist is just what it says; an accurate reading of what your station has programmed over a certain period of time. Some stations opt for a monthly issue, but if you can get one out on a bi-weekly basis, so much the better. The info will be more current and with the number of new albums now being released each week, you definitely need more of a forum to indicate your choices of material.

Here are some hints to help in setting-up a playlist: 1) Get the correct names and addresses of record company reps. Type them onto peel-off label sheets which you can then photocopy onto other blank label sheets. This way you don't have to retype them each time a playlist comes out. If you have access to a computer with label printout service, great!

2) In order to collate the information, you must have a method of gathering accurate data. One good way to do that is as follows: When a record comes into the station, write down the artist, album title and label on a card that fits a rotary desktop file. Indicate the date the album was put on the shelves and made available for airplay. Also write A/P (Airplay) to be used to fill-in the dates that the disc was played.

Each DJ should fill-out a playlist during his/her shift. the sheet should allow room for album, artist and cut played. Leave room for the announcer

to indicate if the cut played is from a new release. When the sheets are collected by your record librarian (if you don't have one, appoint one!), transfer the DJ information to the rotary file cards. For example, you may see something like: NRBQ - Tiddly Winks - Red Rooster/Rounder - 9/15/80, A/P9/15, 9/15, 9/17, 9/18, 9/19, 9/20, 9/22, 9/23. You now can ascertain that this new disc was played 9 times during that one-week period. Compare this total with other new releases and you can structure a listing that indicates the most played new records at your station.

Each playlist should include the station call letters, frequency, address, phone number and music directors' name. Don't limit your playlist just to LP's played. Be proud of your other programming. . . jot down info on your special news, public affairs and sports program offerings. Believe me, the more varied radio programming that you do in a professional manner, the more highly outside industry personnel will regard you and your operation.

Finally, **be honest** with your tabulations. Each station in each market is different and the newest Rolling Stones album doesn't have to appear as the number one album by divine right. In addition, do not ask for extra copies unless you are indeed running a promotion or other special event. If a record rep gets a sense that these extra mailings just fill the holes in your personal record collections you will be doing your station and your listeners a great disservice.

I'd like to hear about how your station handles record company relations and what suggestions you can offer to other stations who have problems in this area. Send me a line c/o, **Journal of College Radio**, Box 592, Vails Gate, NY 12584.



# GOING FM? DON'T GIVE UP UNTIL YOU CHECK WITH US.

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# what happened to the news?

by Jerry C. Hudson, Ph.D.,  
Dept. of Mass Communications  
Texas Tech University

*Editor's Note: The following article uses as an illustrative example a campus-oriented news operation with the traditional frequent five-minute newscast and it examines techniques useful in the gathering and writing of*

*news in such a setting. Remember though that many of the techniques and suggestions can easily be adapted to stations whose news coverage is more community-oriented and/or whose news schedules and format*

*may lean towards the alternative approach of longer but less frequent newscasts, with longer, more in-depth story development within each newscast.*

JT

During the past year, I participated in three group discussions with student news representatives from various college radio stations. In each discussion, the major issues seemed to center around questions concerning "news format." In which hourly segment should a newscast air? What is the ideal length of a newscast? What should the newscasters say going into and coming out of a newscast? What are the ideal lengths of sports and weather segments? Is a musical intro better than a vocal intro? Is UPI better than AP? After the discussions, my perception of the issues was reinforced each time I listened to a college radio station newscast.

Apparently most station representatives exerted great efforts to develop news formats and trite phrases for news intros. However, few newscasts reflected students' concerns for news gathering techniques or the content of news stories. Many newscasts were comprised only of national and world stories taken from wire services.

The presentation of news should include information that is of interest to the largest number of listeners. In this instance, we assume that a college radio station's audience is mainly composed of college students. Campus activities and events are major news items of interest to most students. The following suggestions will assist the beginning student broadcast journalist in utilizing the university for developing news gathering techniques and for improving the content of news stories.

**1. Develop A Future File.** A "future file" is a daily source for news stories. Thirty-one legal size file folders numbered from one through thirty-one represent each day of the month. Newspaper clippings, news releases and/or reporter notes concerning scheduled events, meetings and feature material are placed in the numbered folder representing the appropriate day of the month. For example, a story appears in the paper on the 5th concerning a guest speaker on the 20th of the month. The article is placed in the folder marked "20".

Each morning the "assignments editor" or reporter checks the folder corresponding to that day's date. Daily events, meetings and activities can be assigned to the student reporter according to priority.

With a "future file," or similar organization, the news department can keep track of important meetings and events. Reporters may use the newspaper clippings for background information and for developing a list of relevant interview questions. Public service announcements and announcements of upcoming events can be written from information contained in the "future file." Its uses are varied, but essential to the development of an efficient news department.

**2. Rewrite Stories For Each Newscast.** Most of the radio stations in a market will subscribe to the same wire service. Consequently, a news story will have the exact wording on all the stations unless a reporter rewrites the story. Few new major stories "break" during a broadcast day; therefore, stories sometimes run in eighteen to twenty newscasts during a



single day without new developments. Other news stories may run for days or weeks with many "updates." Most national and world stories are nothing more than daily "updates."

By hearing a story with the same wording in every newscast, a listener could develop "news boredom." Listeners may even change stations during the news to escape the stale, familiar wording of each story. In many cases, the listeners never tune back after the newscast.

Broadcast journalists can put a new sound on an old story through fresh approaches, different leads and new angles without distorting the story. Related stories about similar subjects, individuals or events may be combined into one story. Developing stories may be rewritten in chronological order to give a clearer picture of the complete story.

The student reporter should not be satisfied with just reading the news fluently. Each newscast should be prepared with factual, interesting information reflecting a fresh new sound written in brief, conversational style. Time must not be wasted by writing long, formal, adjective-filled stories.

**3. Localize Major Stories.** One of the most difficult decisions a student journalist has to make is selecting the stories for a newscast. A newscaster must select the stories with the greatest interest to the station's listeners. In most cases, a five-minute newscast will include only eight to ten stories. If a station's newscast is adjacent to a network newscast, the station should consider only state and local stories. The network newscast will, more than likely, contain the important national and world stories. However, the student journalist can localize a national or world story by developing local angles. For example, if gold prices increase to a thousand dollars an ounce, the student journalist may conduct a survey of students to determine the resulting effects on purchases of class rings or gifts containing gold. If airline fares increase, report the effects on student travel.

Regional and state stories are equally important for localizing news. Stories that are geographically closer to a station's audience probably will mean more to its audience. How are students affected by the credit squeeze? What are the prospects for local part-time jobs?

A journalist with the ability to identify local angles to major stories will help develop a "new" and "different" news sound. In addition, the news will become more important to the station's listeners. However, "localizing" every story could result in a boring newscast with little impact.

**4. Develop Campus and City Beats.** Student broadcast journalists should establish a series of daily "checks" with news sources. Major campus news sources could be offices of Development and University Relations, Legal Affairs, University Public Information, Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, Student Affairs, Deans of Colleges and Schools, Department Heads, Student Services, Sports Information and University Police. Scheduled meetings of the Faculty Senate, Board of Regents, Alumni Association and various student organizations provide important news sources for campus stations.

Local and state agencies have access to important information which affects listener's lives. Local agencies include city police, sheriff, state police, hospitals, fire departments, ambulance services, civil defense

and the Federal Aviation Agency. Reporters can contact representatives of each agency on a regular basis to gather news or to verify stories received from other news sources.

Reporters assigned to a specific source are called "beat reporters." Beats can be covered by two methods. The reporter can check with the news sources in person or contact them by telephone.

When establishing contact with an agency or individual, one should visit the source and explain the station's goals and needs. The student reporter can develop a good rapport with news sources by making calls at a regular time and by being brief. The methods used to develop good campus and city news sources can also be utilized in commercial broadcasting. Campus contacts are often maintained after the student broadcaster enters the commercial field. In many cases, the success of a news department depends on the development and cooperation of news sources.

**5. Use Voicers and/or Actualities in Each Newscast.** Often the student broadcast journalist reads every story in the newscast. The listener is forced

(Continued on page 13)

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# public files

(Continued from page 7)

asking to see their public file. However, the rules say you must be ready for just such a request from any member of the public, or from a member of the Commission staff on an inspection visit.

Make sure that your public file is kept up to date in its contents, and that older materials which no longer need be retained are removed. **Let every member of your staff know where the public file is, and how to handle any requests to see such material.** The public file should be accessible during normal business hours by someone on duty during those times. Such access should be

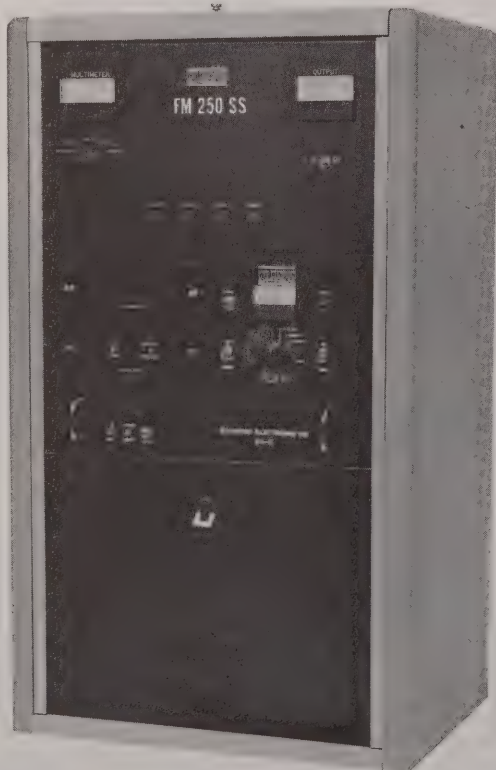
limited so that materials in the public file are not subject to disappearances. Members of the public utilizing their access privilege should be supervised to prevent any documents from being taken. The public file itself, while accessible, should also be secure to prevent unauthorized access and removal of any materials.

Of course, the public file does not represent all of the written records which must be maintained by the station. The most important additions are the program, operating, and maintenance logs which we expect to be the subject of a later article.

Now that you have read this article, you may be lulled into the sense of security that you know everything there is to know about public files. As Mr. Carson might say to Mr. McMahon, "Wrong, Notice-of-Violation-breath!" These are the basics. For the details, it is recommended that you sit down and try to plow through section 73.3527 and all of its cross-references. Meanwhile, the basics will help you get started in the job of getting in shape for that almost inevitable day when a member of the public and/or the FCC staff knocks on your door and asks to see your public file.

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# what happened to the news

(Continued from page 11)

to listen to one voice for the entire newscast or change stations. A change of voice or the addition of natural sound enriches and enlivens the newscast. By using "voicers" and "actualities," the newscast will sound more up-to-the-moment and more meaningful to the listeners. The aim is to add authenticity to the newscast without diminishing the journalistic quality of a story.

The telephone equipped with tape-recording equipment and a portable cassette recorder are essential to the reporter for developing "professional sounding" actualities. The actuality will provide a direct link between the newsmaker and the listeners. The audience can hear exactly what the newsmaker said and how he or she said it.

Student reporters have "ready-made" news sources on campus. Stories concerning government, economy, business or politics can be localized by getting comments from professors dealing with the news items. The professors' comments can be recorded and used as an actuality. The university faculty should be frequently utilized as a source for news actualities.

University coaches and athletes are usually well known to the students. student reporters could develop lines or communication with the players and the athletic department. Comments from the coaches or players about the last game and the upcoming game make excellent actualities.

There are several agencies and organizations in Washington, D.C. which provide new, daily audio actuality feeds. Audio feeds are provided by the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, HEW, HUD, Interior, Transportation and Treasury. The telephone numbers for these sources can be obtained from the National Association of Broadcasters. However, if the reporter used material from any of these sources, the source should be identified when the actuality or voicer concerns a controversial issue of public importance. Obviously, the content of these feeds may reflect any bias within the source agency.

Voicers may be recorded on the scene or in the studio. The reporter may cover a news event and record the story on a cassette recorder with natural sound in the background. A report with natural sound provides news excitement and realism.

On days when news is "slow," different reporters can rewrite wire stories and record them in the studio. The newscaster can use these reports for providing voice contrast and for increasing the "professional" sound of the news.

When using actualities and/or voicers, particularly within a five-minute newscast, one should remember to keep the length under fifteen seconds. Natural sound and actualities are important, but should not dominate a newscast. The script should continue to be the main source of news.

## 6. Produce Features and Human

**Interest Stories.** The success of television's "Real People" and "PM Magazine" reflect the interest in programs featuring human interest stories. Audiences enjoy stories about people and unusual activities.

The student journalist should seek students and faculty members with unusual interests, activities, hobbies and beliefs. Some stories may be more timely than others; therefore, the reporter should keep a catalogue of individuals who have seasonal interests and hobbies. For instance, the reporter could produce a feature about unique Christmas gifts in December.

Faculty members often conduct interesting research or develop unique hobbies. Heads of departments and deans of colleges and schools may be helpful in identifying faculty engaged in research activities.

Students frequently build and  
(Continued on page 14)

## ANNOUNCING

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# what happened to the news?

(Continued from page 13)

develop interesting class projects. Engineering students often invent or develop senior projects. For example, one group of engineering students built canoes made of concrete. The canoes were raced in the university swimming pool and the winner received a cash prize.

Features and human interest stories can be broadcast in newscasts or in "magazine" type programs. If the newscasts are used as an avenue for broadcasting human interest stories,

the student reporter may want to limit the story to only sixty seconds. The feature should not be run in every newscast nor should every newscast contain a feature.

## Conclusions

Questions concerning news format are important, but the student journalist should be more concerned with the information contained within the format. One may easily become sidetracked by "playing" radio newscaster rather than developing into a radio

reporter. The college radio station's news department does not become "professional" by reading wire copy only and mimicking successful large-market radio stations. Reporters should study and develop techniques of identifying and writing interesting news for listeners.

Campus stations can and should provide listeners with news that is timely and interesting; therefore, student reporters must learn to gather, write and report news **before** solving news format problems.

# Union College radio station celebrates 60 years

When the Union College radio station, WRUC, celebrated its 60th anniversary on Tuesday, Oct. 14, it also marked the 60th anniversary of what is believed to be the first scheduled broadcast by a licensed station in the country.

The station, then known by the call letters 2ADD, signed on at 8 p.m., October 14, 1920, with a scheduled program of popular music. The first program was monitored on receivers locally and as far as Hartford, Conn., 105 miles from the campus.

Members of the campus community celebrated with WRUC at a "birthday party/record hop" and a private reception for WRUC "alumni".

Also, during the week WRUC replayed some of its programs from the last 10 to 20 years of broadcasting.

The initial broadcast from the campus radio station ran from 8 to 8:15 p.m. and from 8:18 to 8:30 p.m. The transmitter and studio were in a shack behind the College's electrical engineering building, with the antenna strung between two nearby trees.

The October 14, 1920 program was the first in a series of regularly scheduled Thursday evening concerts broadcast. Three were aired before November 2, 1920, the date Pittsburgh's KDKA signed on with the results of the Harding-Cox election, which were also carried over the Union station.

On November 14, 1920, the station broadcast live the Hobart-Union football game from Geneva, N.Y., the first time a sports event was aired for the general public.

The following spring, students associated with the station staged their most spectacular stunt, the "baby carriage incident," which is considered the first instance of portable radio reception in the nation.

On May 6, 1921, students disguised a radio receiver in a baby carriage and wheeled the carriage, with baby, through downtown Schenectady. The antenna was attached to the carriage, the tuning device was between the

handles, the vacuum tube amplifier and components were next to the baby, and the storage batteries were underneath the carriage.

The early development of radio at Union was largely the work of Charles Proteus Steinmetz, who from 1902 to 1913 was head of the electrical engineering department at the College.

Today, WRUC is a 10-watt station, operating at 90.9 on the FM dial with a range of one to 10 miles. The station currently has a petition before the Federal Communications Commission to upgrade WRUC to 100 watts and change its frequency.

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# book review

*Radio in the Television Age* by Peter Fornatale and Joshua E. Mills  
published by The Overlook Press

Those of us who've known Pete Fornatale and his radio work on WNEW-FM in New York, and those who heard Pete in person at last year's IBS National Convention have looked forward to publication of this book with some anticipation. It was due out this past Summer, but delays of one kind or another postponed publication till late October.

Most of the books you'll find about broadcasting on your library's shelves are probably outdated, dwelling on radio's distant past, and illustrated with stiffly posted photographs of past legends dressed in dark suits with wide lapels and perhaps a snappy bow-tie. You'll find a lot of information about what used to be, but not a whole lot about the past 30 years of radio. It's usually about that point that the emphasis of the book shifts to television, dismissing radio as a medium populated solely by a breed known as "disc jockeys" who provide inane chatter to fill the small spaces between commercials and records.

Sure, radio has changed since the "golden days" ended with the impact of television. But, little except passing references to these changes have been recognized in most books about broadcasting. Most of our information on recent and current conditions comes from our own experience as listeners, participants, and from various trade publications. The latter can be of some help to those who already speak and understand the jargon peculiar to the industry. But, they tend to provide a close-up view of conditions at a particular moment in time rather than necessarily offering any perspective.

It is that void that Fornatale and Mills have attempted to fill. The uniqueness here is the point of view; an emphasis on radio of the present and recent past with few words given over to sentimental remembrances of "old-time" radio programs. For one thing, the authors are too young to remember most of them. In terms of programming in particular, the concentration is as promised, on the present.

The authors trace the creation and

development of modern radio formats; Top 40, All-News, Country and Western, Disco, Classical, Progressive, etc. Where others concentrate on radio pioneers such as Marconi, here the mini-portraits are those of people like Alan Freed, Gordon McLendon, Chuck Blore, Tom Donahue and Todd Storz who have made their impact in modern times.

When we are taken back beyond the 50's, it's usually to track a technological regulatory, or economic development and its evolutionary effects on the radio broadcast industry.

The book begins as the "golden age" ends, discussing the various methods stations adapted for their survival once television forced the change. The massive shift in emphasis from network to local service is shown, and the reasoning and strategies explained in easily understood terms. The emergence and recognition of the "teen culture" and its effect on programming and formats is examined.

A chapter is devoted to the development of radio news taking a look at the basis established in the yearly years, and the technology that made modern news coverage possible. Successes and failures are mentioned; the success of the ABC Radio 4-network split and the failure of NBC's News and Information Service (NIS).

The Seventies are given a chapter tracking format specialization, regulatory changes and proposals, the proliferation of media, and the emergence of citizen activist groups. FM is also given its own chapter.

All of noncommercial radio is packed into one chapter, about 20 pages in length. Unfortunately, this simply does not leave enough room for the kind of development, explanation, and detail that many of us would like to have seen, although the chapter covers more ground more comprehensively in 20 pages than some others do in longer academic discourses. There is more recognition of different kinds of noncommercial radio stations than most books make, but that brief taste tends to make you want more.

Again, for the sake of identification, all 10-watt stations are labelled by

power rather than recognized for the kinds of creative and diverse programming they often provide. This same "lumping" is also applied to the many different types of higher-powered college stations and all of us who are involved know that there's virtually no such entity as a "typical" college radio station. Where format is a recognized point of comparison in commercial broadcasting, somehow that criterion seems lost for the most part when describing "college radio."

The 10-watt regulatory upheaval is covered in some detail, illustrating just how current the contents are. But there too, we find no follow-up mention that about 2/3 of the 10-watt stations in the country have applied for power increases to 100-watts or more. That will significantly change the noncommercial radio picture. One other point missed in the 10-watt discussion was that the indefinite "freeze" by the FCC against acceptance of applications to build new 10-watt stations has eliminated what

(Continued on page 16)

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# book review

(Continued from page 15)

was previously the most widely utilized entry level for noncommercial radio stations. It allowed stations to get on the air at a relatively low cost and develop from that point. Now, the 100-watt level with its higher initial costs for engineering and equipment, and higher ongoing costs for operation has proven prohibitive as a starting point in many cases.

IBS is given brief mention, but is characterized by the limited number of full-time employees, with no recognition given to the significant contributions of expertise and experience from industry professionals who serve the organization on a voluntary basis. Of course, that same error is often made as it applies to school and college radio stations; they are judged by the limited number of full-time professionals they employ without consideration or real recognition of the efforts of volunteers.

It is encouraging to see that IBS is recognized for its efforts on behalf of 10-watt FM stations and we are identified as the only organization supporting their interests. Though we were far from successful in dissuading the FCC from all of its regulatory changes, our stations may be the ultimate beneficiaries after all.

The development of college radio from carrier-current to on-air FM to cable FM was not really explained, but again, this may have been a result of the limitation on space.

In fact, if there is one underlying criticism of the book itself, it is that there isn't really enough space devoted to any one area. That can be a plus factor for those looking for a comprehensive summary, but those of us who are radio broadcast junkies look for more.

The writing style is generally objective, interesting, and never assumes the reader understands jargon or technology without explanation. Engineering types may scoff at some of the attempts of laymen explanations such as the differences between AM and FM transmissions, but the non-engineers (most of us) will welcome the efforts.

Those who are looking for something new or startling will not find it here. Most of the information in

the book has been published before in one form or another — in other texts, in the broadcast trade magazines, and with more recent issues, widely-read newspapers. But, here an attempt is made to gather it all in one place; arrange it in some developmental order, and describe it in terms anyone can understand.

This kind of thing has been done before with the early days of radio, but not nearly so well or so often with present-day radio formats. After all, how many texts now found being used in broadcast curriculums explore the subtle development and differences from "underground" to "progressive" to AOR? It seems to require someone with industry experience in recent times — not an academic-type who read it all somewhere, maybe.

Too many people now becoming involved in radio have a very narrow field of vision and little or no understanding of how what we have now came about. Their disinterest in reading dry, academic broadcast texts full of outdated material may have contributed to this lack of perspective. That excuse is gone with the publication of this book.

Reading it is not a chore as with some other broadcast books. In fact, it can be quite interesting to follow the developments of various programming elements we take for granted today. Not enough of us seem concerned about where this all came from, which helps explain why things are the way they are today. An understanding of the past, even the recent past, is necessary to help improve radio for the future.

Fornatale and Mills have given us a painless way to gain some perspective, and those interested in radio should take advantage of the opportunity whether or not they are broadcast majors. In fact, we can easily see the utilization of this book as a supplementary text for a broadcast course. But, those who choose other academic majors will still find the book worthwhile as long as they have some curiosity about radio.

If you really want more than provided in the text, there's a nifty bibliography at the back containing over 125 sources for follow-up, and incidentally, some great possibilities for research.

The cover price of \$12.95 is a bit steep for a book of just over 200

pages. But, if you're really into radio, the price won't stop you. One way to bring down the price is to get a couple of people to share the purchase of a copy and then donate it to the station's library. Another way is to wait for the expected paperback version, presumably at a more reasonable price. That may well be when you see it beginning to gain acceptance as a supplementary broadcast course text.

We're glad there's finally a book on radio which doesn't treat it as a stepchild of television but recognizes its positive, if changed values and its enormous but often undervalued impact. While it contains few if any surprises, just gathering the information and setting it all down in one place is no minor achievement. Doing it in an informal, narrative style makes it all the more welcome.

JT

## BMI awards open

A total of \$15,000 is available to young composers in the 29th annual BMI Awards to Student Composers competition sponsored by Broadcast Music, Inc., the performing rights licensing organization.

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Students may enter no more than one composition which need not have been composed during the year of entry.

The 1980-81 competition closes February 16, 1981. Official rules and entry blanks are available from James G. Roy, Jr., Director, BMI Awards to Student Composers, Broadcast Music, Inc., 320 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019.



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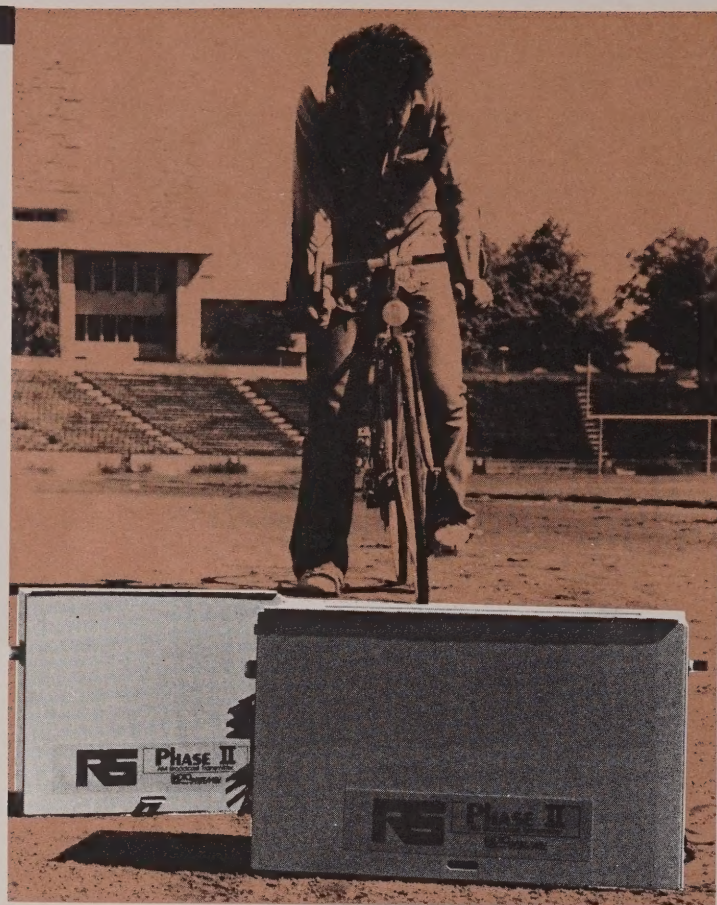
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